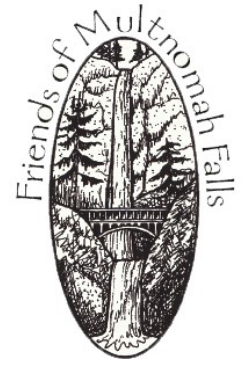


Focus on the Falls



Upper Multnomah Creek Bridge
February 2026 Photo by a hiker

SPRING 2026



Lodge 1927

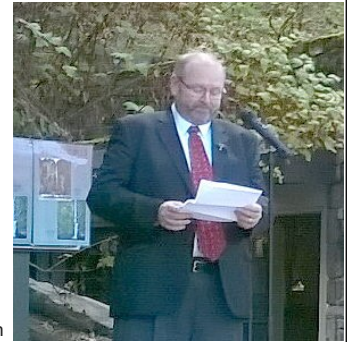
INTERPRETIVE VOLUNTEER TRAINING WORKSHOP

WHERE: Corbett Fire Hall 36930 Historic Columbia River Highway, Corbett 97019 (in back)

WHEN: Saturday March 28th, 9:30 AM-1:00PM

PROGRAM: Speaker **Chet Benson** historian, author and great grandson of Simon Benson who donated the land for the site. There will also be updating the Visitor Center information, snacks and door prizes.

Chet Benson at Multnomah Falls 100th Site Celebration



FOMF President's Message – Russ Williams

Happy Spring everyone. I hope you all had a wonderful holiday season. The first thing I wish to say is THANK YOU ALL and to welcome our new volunteers. The past several months I have been, to say the least, a trying time given the Gov't shutdown and the move to the entrance of the restrooms location, the road closure of the viaduct and the road closures near Vista House. Now we are facing another challenge with the remodel of the Lodge, the restroom area has already begun and will give us some new challenges. We don't know when the Visitor Center remodel will start but we will keep you informed as we hear any news. I wish to give a special shoutout to **Dave Mysinger** for all the work he has done this past year, I'm certain we can attribute a large portion of the Friends success to him. I wish also to give a shoutout to the schedulers and the effort they put in to keep the VC staffed and open. Lastly I wish to thank the volunteers we lost this past year, without them and their dedication to the VC we would not be the organization we are today.

Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Public Affairs Officer Beth Kennedy

Our Forest Supervisor, **Donna Mickley** retired from the agency on Feb. 20th. She has had a long and full 37 year career with the US Forest Service and we wish her well in all of her new adventures! Casey Gatz from our staff will temporarily be filling behind her.

Trail work continues on the Eagle Creek and Wahclella Falls trails post December 2025 storm damage. We are working towards opening in the spring. Many thanks to our trail partners, Trail Keepers of Oregon and Pacific Crest Trail Association.

Our agency now has approval to hire seasonal recreation positions for this coming summer, which will be a tremendous help for our trails crew, developed recreation and all other things recreation for us! I am sure many of you have already met **Efeydi Monje**. We are lucky enough to have her with us through the month of May helping in many ways.

QR codes are now on the interpretive signs at the Catherine Creek accessible trail sharing stories of local community members and their connections to the site and trail.

(Eagle Creek 2026 photos by Susan McDonnell PCTA Crew Leader Mt. Hood Chapter)



Friends of Multnomah
Falls
PO Box 426 Troutdale OR
97060

friendsofmultnomahfalls.org

Board of Directors 2025

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Jill Willis (Ex Officio)

Monthly Calendar Coordinator

Karen Stefonek

Newsletter editor

Ron Goodwin

goodwinron37@gmail.com

(new email)

Send comments and ideas.

Our Mission Statement

“The Friends of Multnomah Falls are dedicated to preserving and enhancing the unique natural, scenic and historic qualities of Multnomah Falls while providing a memorable experience for our visitors.”

ODOT by TERRA LINGLEY Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Coordinator

Thank you for your continued patience while we restore and improve areas along Interstate-84 and the Historic Columbia River Highway. Travelers should plan ahead, especially on weekends when traffic volumes increase.

The Historic Highway east of Multnomah Falls Lodge remains closed to all traffic, including bicycles and vehicles, until spring 2026 as crews continue restoration and repairs to the 100 year-old elevated highway structure. Crews recently paved the viaduct and installed new supportive rebar beneath the road surface. The project will restore the structure and preserve its appearance with its original color and texture once complete.

Travelers should prepare for construction delays on I-84 between Ainsworth State Park and Bonneville Dam starting in March as traffic is restricted to one lane in each direction until this fall. Both directions of traffic will share the westbound bridge over the McCord Creek for about 4 months while crews work to remove and rebuild the eastbound bridge.

In summer through fall 2026, the eastbound and westbound bridges will be open but one lane in each direction will remain closed. Crews are beginning the first visible work in 2026 for interstate travelers as they begin replacing the eastbound bridge. Replacing the bridge will eliminate a dip in the road and increase safety, earthquake resilience and the lifespan of the highway. Over the last few months, crews have been working under the bridge to set up supports beneath the existing bridge. Over the next several months, crews will use large cranes to remove the existing eastbound bridge and install a new bridge in its place.

The Historic Columbia River Highway State Trail will also close for two months in 2026 with shuttle service for trail users between John B. Yeon and Toothrock Trailheads. Details about the shuttle are available on the [project website](#).

Viento State Park to Mitchell Point: Work continues to close the gap in the State Trail.



**BONNEVILLE DAM & LOCK by Alex Harmon Natural Resource Specialist
US Army Corps of Engineers**

Our operations (for now) are expected to be relatively normal going into the spring and summertime, with our visitor centers (both OR and WA) open every day 9-5, and our Navigation Lock visitor area open daily from Memorial Day to Labor Day, 1-4pm.

As in years past, we expect the Spring Chinook Salmon run to kick off our fish viewing season starting around the beginning of April. The viewing windows are usually quite exciting from then until the fish runs end in November.

While us rangers are certainly concerned about low snowpack affecting wildfire season (as most PNW dwellers are), we do not have any predictions on how it will affect flow. That information may be available from the Federal Columbia River Power System.

For electrical generation, we send most of our water through the spillway instead of the powerhouses between April and August, so power production is lower in the summer anyway to accommodate fish passage. Despite the lower production, we still offer daily tours into both of our powerhouses. One of our main concerns over low snowpack is that it may cause higher river temperatures in the Columbia, which are detrimental to salmon. Anything over 70 degrees F can begin to cause physiological stress to them.



Volunteer of the year 2025

Karen Stefonek has been a Friends of Multnomah Falls volunteer since 2019 and in that time she has been a volunteer in the Visitor Center, board member, secretary and now the calendar coordinator scheduling all of the 39 volunteers with varying schedules to meet their own availability. She lives in Corbett. She and her husband **Dave** have traveled to other countries doing volunteer work with their church.

FRIENDS OF MULTNOMAH FALLS VOLUNTEER PROFILE by Dave Mysinger

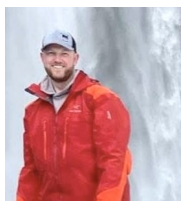
My time as a volunteer with the Friends of Multnomah Falls was preceded by 7 years with Volunteers in the Gorge, a group formed in 2001 by Oregon State Parks and State Police. Outside of law enforcement, we were the eyes and ears patrolling the west end of the Gorge. We used our own vehicles and fuel to watch for vehicle break-ins and other suspicious activity along the Historic Highway, I-84 and trailhead parking areas. We also picked up litter when safe to do so. The USFS and Corps of Engineers were brought on as partners with Oregon Parks Recreation Department and Oregon State Police a couple years later.



After their disbandment in 2008, I was brought on as a FS volunteer by the Multnomah Falls on-site-manager who was our lead before disbanding. I then began doing regular shifts in the Visitor Center and then in 2013, the FS hired me as a part-time employee to cover vacation and other days. This was usually during the late fall and early spring before the seasonal staff came on. This lasted until the Covid pandemic hit. I'm still technically a FS volunteer, but since 2020 have served on the FOMF board as a regular member, vice president, president and back to vice president plus as the liaison between the FOMF, FS and Multnomah Lodge. I have also been the Wednesday scheduler for many years.

The Passing of Carl Collins

Carl passed last December at the age of 79 in Vancouver, Washington. He was a science teacher at Centennial and Reynolds high schools and used that expertise to teach for 3 years in Taiwan. Carl also coached both track and football and took students on week long science field trips to Central Oregon. Before returning to Oregon he directed Camp Deer Run in east Texas and taught at Dallas Christian High School. With FOMF volunteered in the center Carl served board as president and with his wife **Kathy** on many committees.



We have a new volunteer **Ted Sindzinski**, who brings many experiences having been with the Mt. St. Helens Institute. In addition to the opportunity to enter the crater of the mountain he climbed the mountain over 40 times! Ted also did "preventive Search and Rescue" by roving the trails in the MSH National Monument connecting with climbers and ensuring their safety.

TRIVIA AND OBSERVATIONS

Being in the Visitor Center you may have noticed (cannot miss them in the summer with the doors open) the trains passing by. One particular one is the potash unit train with often a combination of UPRR, Canadian Pacific and Kansas City locomotives. These mile plus long trains travel 1,600 miles from Saskatchewan, Canada to the Canpotex terminal in Portland. The other main port on the Pacific is Vancouver B.C. but the Columbia River Gorge is preferred since it is the only lowland passage through the mountains between Mexico and Alaska. Trains do not like to go over mountains if they can help it. From here it is shipped to 40 different countries with the main ones being Brazil, China and India where it is used primarily in agricultural fertilizers, Saskatchewan's output is a key ingredient in global food security. Fertilizer is responsible for half of the world's current food production.



In fertilizers, the potassium from potash increases plant growth and crop yields, strengthens roots, improves plants' water efficiency, and increases pest and disease resistance. It improves the color, texture, and taste of food. Potassium is an essential element of the human diet, required for the growth and maintenance of tissues, muscles and organs, as well as the electrical activity of the heart. Fertilizer production is not only an economic driver in Canada, but it is also a critical resource for customers around the world, especially in the United States. The fertilizer industry contributes \$23 billion a year to Canada's economy and provides over 76,000 jobs. Some cars are specially designed enabling each to carry 21,000 tons.



In November **Alex Bradley** came into the Visitor Center after walking 2,560 miles by road to Oregon City from Austin, Texas. This was to honor his buddy who 3 years earlier had committed suicide off the historic Oregon City bridge. Alex did this walk to bring awareness about mental health and suicide prevention. His sister happened to be in Portland and brought him out to the Falls. RG

WEB SITE AND FACEBOOK

We have a web site at friendsofmultnomahfalls.org contact **Jerry King** at (GeraldBKing@gmail.com) is for placing items on our website. **Karen Stefonek** (stefonek@comcast.net) is the contact for placing items on the Group Facebook *Friends of Multnomah Falls* page. Check both of these items to keep up with new activities at the Falls. Photos are always welcome.

Another good source of information is the facebook site *Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area -US Forest Service*.

The new Crown Point Country Historical Society Museum has its grand opening on March 21st with regular hours of 10am – 3pm Saturdays and Sundays located across Highway 30 from the Corbett Fire Station.

Oregon State Parks will start charging a \$10 fee to park at Latourell Falls trailhead at Guy Talbot St. Pk., Bridal Veil Scenic Viewpoint and Angels Rest trailhead on March 30th ; Vista House and Starvation Falls already have this fee here in the Gorge.

NEW VOLUNTEERS ALWAYS WELCOME

The Friends of Multnomah Falls organization is always looking for new volunteers who love The Gorge and enjoy meeting people of all ages and places. We offer our volunteers a flexible schedule and supportive training opportunities. After 16 hours of volunteering you earn a Northwest Forest pass from the USFS. If you would like to become a volunteer or want more information about the FOMF program, please contact FOMF Volunteer Recruiter, **Chris Meinicke**, (chris.meinicke@outlook.com or 503-645-3124), for more details.

FRIENDS OF MULTNOMAH MEMBERSHIP FORM

Renewing Member FOMF is a 100% volunteer, private, non-profit, 501-c-3 tax-exempt organization.

\$20 Individual \$35 Family \$50 Contributing \$100 Supporting
 \$250 Sustaining \$500 Benefactor \$1000 Lifetime

Make checks payable to: Friends of Multnomah Falls, and fill out the information below.

Name: _____ Phone: _____
Address: _____ Email _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Please send this application to:

Friends of Multnomah Falls
P.O. Box 426
Troutdale, OR 97060

